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Kirkland Police Dept.

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To Whom It May Concern in the City of Kirkland,

I have tried to write this and keep it short, but cannot. I have too much to say. I am writing on behalf of "Business" in downtown Kirkland.

I was going to write, but kept putting it off. The attitude of "what good will it do?" stopped me. After talking of an incidence that happened a couple of weeks ago, I am encouraged to write.

The Incidence: As I was working, out the corner of my eye I noticed a pickup truck (owned and driven by a business owner) going a little too fast in the Marina Park Parking lot. The lot was full, he went over to the first horseshoe (part of the lot). He must have noticed the open spot in our half. I watched as he cut off a car, the back wheel of his truck went over the curb, and he went faster then he should to get back and get that vacant spot.

Please help me understand. The issue is business owners and their employees taking prime parking in Kirkland. I have been an employee in downtown Kirkland for 37 yrs. As the salon I work at (88 Kirkland Salon, previously Today's Headlines, and before that Coiffure 88) looks over Marina Park I watch daily the cars circling to find a place to park. I also watch employees move their cars. It seems the city takes 2 steps forward and 3 back all the time on this parking issue.

As a Hair stylist I talk to clients all the time while they are in my chair. So many say "They only come to Kirkland to get their done, there is nothing down here". I ask "If they get out of their cars and walk around. There is a lot down here." Then the issue of parking comes up.

I know you are trying. But when they sit in my chair looking out over the parking lot, I get comments like, "Is that what you have to do? Move your car every 3 hrs?" I have to admit that I get on my "Soap Box." No I park in the parking garage where the city is good enough to give us Permit parking.

The business owners down here park on the street and in the lot, so they cannot tell their employees that they cannot park out there. I watch the stylist I work with move their cars, the ones that work in the restaurants, and other businesses, also. At 5:00 they move to the street because it is free. That forces anyone coming to town to do business to pay in the lot. Also you have the ones that use the loading zone and the big trucks really have a hard time getting around them.

I have lost so many clients to this issue, it makes me sad. I was born and raised in this town. I know there is a lot of land used for parking downtown "Business owners" just don't get it.

I came to Kirkland on a sunny Sunday afternoon to talk with my employer. There was not a spot to be had down here. So I decided to go ahead to the permit parking area in the garage. Do you know how many cars were there? I was #10, I counted.

When I asked a restaurant owner "Why he was parked on the street." The answer I got was "because I can". Meaning the parking enforcer was not working that day.

One night on my way to my car, I stopped to get a pizza to go. The man behind the register asked a girl working there "Where do you guys park?" I don't know what she said, but my response when I got to the register was "I can tell you where they are supposed to park." (the lower level of the parking garage is almost empty at night).

I'm sorry I don't understand. Why does the city not penalize the business owners? Make them pay for their employees, and then maybe they would make sure their employees parked where they are supposed to be.

When I first started here in 1974, the owners worked together (we don't have that anymore). If I was parked where I was not to be (and we did not have a designated spot) Mrs. Terry was stopped by another Business owner, and my car was brought to her attention. We were asked to leave our clients and put our cars where they belonged. It was part of being an employee there. It would only take once.

Mr. Richardson would not let his employees leave to move their cars. I don't know how, but the Lightfelts (sp) made sure their employees were not in front of their business or anyone else's. I think you need to come up with a way to make the Business owners accountable. Because an employee may not be in front of their business. But they are parking in front of some ones.

As I stated earlier; we did not have designated areas to park, we fought hard to get the city to help us. I am afraid we will lose the permit parking.

I said it would be long, I could continue but I will close. If you would like to have a great view of the Marina park parking lot, come and visit me. Spend the day and watch what really goes on in that lot.

Speed Humps is another subject.....

Thank you for your time,

Sincerely

Roxanne Louise